DC
SHADOW STRIKES
15
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THE Shadow STRIKES!
GANGLAND DOOMED!
by Gerard Jones & Eduardo Barreto

You could say the wind blew 'em in. Mixing them up like it does on the lake-shore where yesterday's papers and that big bill-of-sale some hog-broker lost dance around like they were made for each other.
You could say it was Chicago brought 'em. Because if it's big and it's violent and it's not something you want the kids to know about, then sooner or later it's going to end up in Chicago.
But it wouldn't be true, you know. There was only one thing brought 'em. Only one thing made everything happen.
It was him.

THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE

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It was a funny mix. Torpedoes from every mob in the country. And HIS people. His mystery people.
All making their way however they could to the Loop at the heart of the city.
HEY, BUDDY! DOES DIS BUS GO TO DE LOOP?
NAW. DIS BUS GOES BEEP BEEP, YA GETTIN' IN?
HIYA, MR. VINCENT. GLAD YOU FINALLY MADE IT.
MORNING, SHREWY. ALMOST DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU WITHOUT YOUR HACK.
For a little while it was quiet, while the pieces fell in place.
...SO BIG AL, HE LOOKS AT TOUHY'S TURF AND HE SAYS, "THAT UP THERE... THAT'S VIRGIN TERRITORY FOR WHOREHOUSES!"
WAS HE BEIN' FUNNY?
ARE YOU KIDDIN'? HE WAS JUST BEIN' AL!
HELLO, MARGO. BEEN TOO LONG, DOLL.
PERHAPS NOT LONG ENOUGH... AGENT VINCENT.
HAVE YOU MET CLAUDE FELLOWS OR CLIFF MARSLAND?
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For a little while.
HAW! LOOKA HERE! CUT FAMON SWAPS CLOZE WIT' HIS MOTHER, RIGHT? SO TRACY BLOWS THE OL' LADY TO RIBBONS!
HAW! YA GOTTA LOVE THAT TRACY!

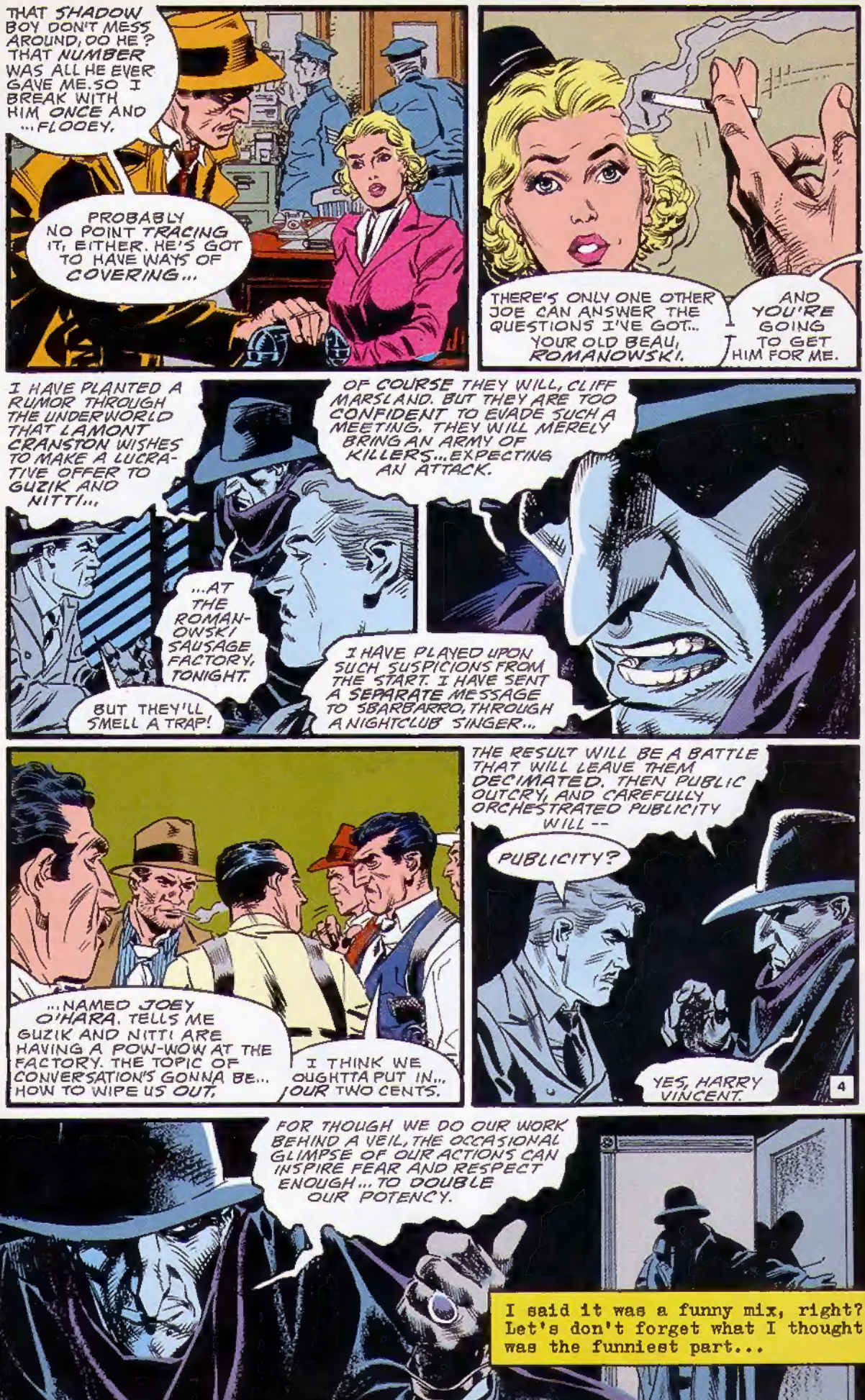
NOSE OUTTA THE PAPER, MOE.
WE GOT REAL PEOPLE TO KILL.

A THUNDERCLOUD HANGS OVER THIS CITY... A CLOUD READY TO BURST... THE CLOUD OF GANG WAR.
IT IS A WAR I HAVE INCITED, BETWEEN THE GUZIK-NITTI MOB AND THE MAVERICK HALF-STEP SBARBARRO.

I HAD INTENDED TO PLAY ONE PARTY AGAINST THE OTHER, BUILD TENSION UNTIL THE PUBLIC CRIED OUT AGAINST IT...
...THEN END IT ...THROUGH THE USE OF THE NEWS-PAPERS, AND AN HEIRESS NAMED BRENDA SHIELD.

...AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN FINE...IF YOUR POLICE FRIEND CARDONA HADN'T RUN OFF WITH BRENDA...

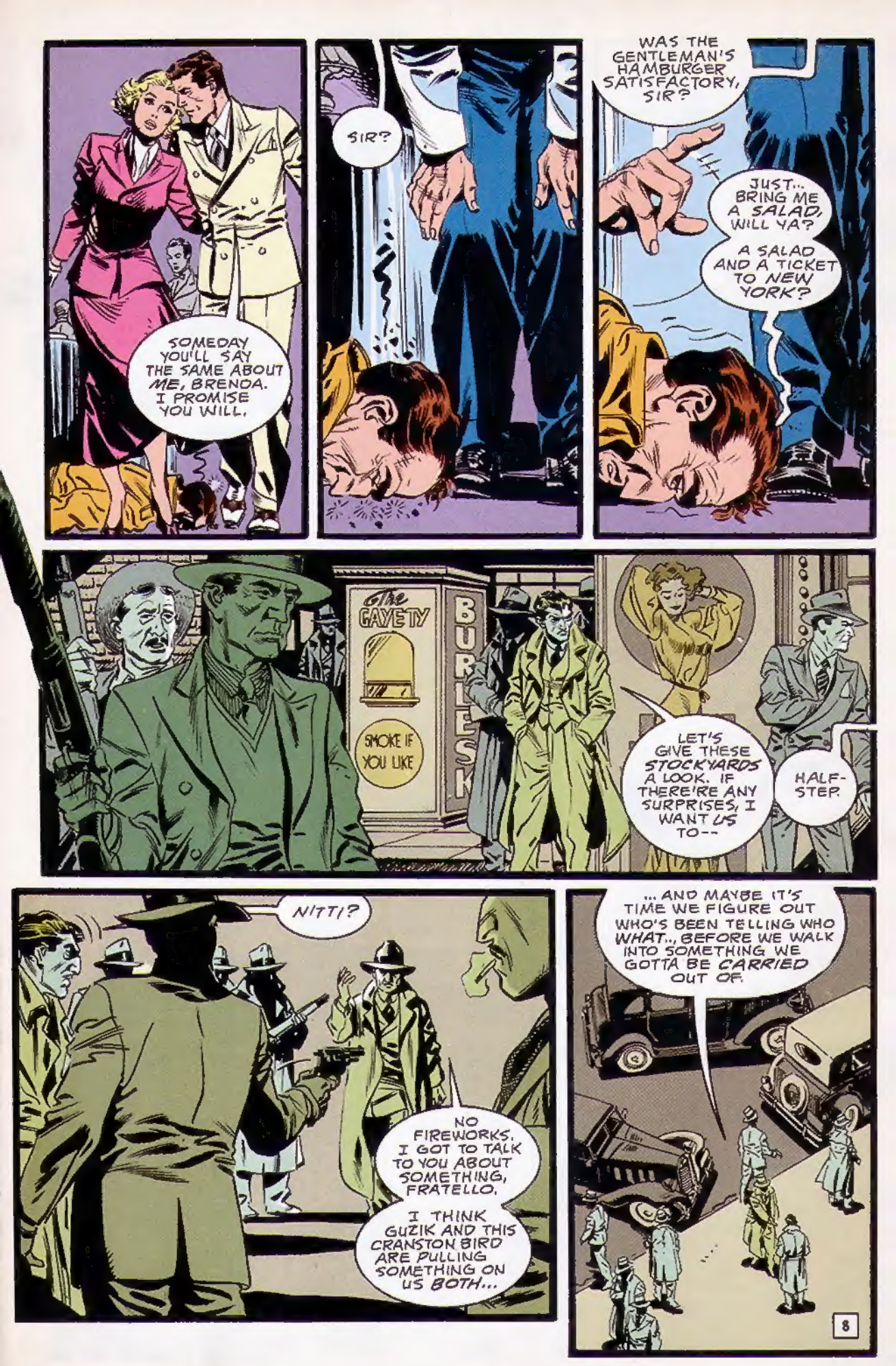
I YAM SORRY, SIR. THAT NUM-BER IS NO LONGER IN SER-VICE.
WANTED
3


THAT SHADOW BOY DON'T MESS AROUND, DO HE? THAT NUMBER WAS ALL HE EVER GAVE ME. SO I BREAK WITH HIM ONCE AND ...FLOOEY.
PROBABLY NO POINT TRACING IT, EITHER. HE'S GOT TO HAVE WAYS OF COVERING...
THERE'S ONLY ONE OTHER JOE CAN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS I'VE GOT... YOUR OLD BEAU, ROMANOWSKI.
AND YOU'RE GOING TO GET HIM FOR ME.
I HAVE PLANTED A RUMOR THROUGH THE UNDERWORLD THAT LAMONT CRANSTON WISHES TO MAKE A LUCRATIVE OFFER TO GUZIK AND NITTI...
OF COURSE THEY WILL, CLIFF MARSLAND. BUT THEY ARE TOO CONFIDENT TO EVADE SUCH A MEETING. THEY WILL MERELY BRING AN ARMY OF KILLERS...EXPECTING AN ATTACK.
...AT THE ROMANOWSKI SAUSAGE FACTORY, TONIGHT.
BUT THEY'LL SMELL A TRAP!
I HAVE PLAYED UPON SUCH SUSPICIONS FROM THE START. I HAVE SENT A SEPARATE MESSAGE TO SBARBARRO, THROUGH A NIGHTCLUB SINGER...
...NAMED JOEY O'HARA, TELLS ME GUZIK AND NITTI ARE HAVING A POW-WOW AT THE FACTORY. THE TOPIC OF CONVERSATION'S GONNA BE... HOW TO WIPE US OUT.
I THINK WE OUGHTTA PUT IN... OUR TWO CENTS.
THE RESULT WILL BE A BATTLE THAT WILL LEAVE THEM DECIMATED. THEN PUBLIC OUTCRY, AND CAREFULLY ORCHESTRATED PUBLICITY WILL --
PUBLICITY?
YES, HARRY VINCENT.
4
FOR THOUGH WE DO OUR WORK BEHIND A VEIL, THE OCCASIONAL GLIMPSE OF OUR ACTIONS CAN INSPIRE FEAR AND RESPECT ENOUGH... TO DOUBLE OUR POTENCY.
I said it was a funny mix, right? Let's don't forget what I thought was the funniest part...

...let's don't forget ME...
CHICK HECK, CHICAGO NEWS SERVICE.
NOW ALL THE THREADS HAVE BEEN WOVEN INTO MY GRAND DESIGN...
SO LET'S JUST HOPE THERE ARE NO LOOSE ENDS LYING AROUND.
JUST WHAT KINDA RESTAURANT IS THIS... THIS STOCKMAN'S INN?
IT'S A FAVORITE PLACE WITH BUSINESSMEN IN THE YARDS. SOMEPLACE TAD CAN GO, WITHOUT RAISING EYEBROWS.
BROTHER, THAT'S A LOT O' COWS.
YES, AND ALL GOING TO SLAUGHTER. ALL IGNORANT VICTIMS OF ANOTHER'S HUNGER...
...LIKE SO MANY OF US IN THIS CITY.
ALL GOING TO BE SERVED UP IN RESTAURANTS JUST LIKE THE ONE WE'RE GOING TO.
BUT I DON'T SUPPOSE THAT WOULD BOTHER A TOUGH POLICEMAN.
BRENDA! I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW GLAD I AM THAT THIS HAS HAPPENED. PLEASE, LISTEN TO ME, DARLING--
MOOOD MAGIC
5

PLEASE, TAD...
YEAH, PLEASE, TAD. I DIDN'T ASK YOU HERE FOR ROMANCE. I'VE GOT SOME QUESTIONS I NEED--
MROOOOOO
CRIMINY. YOU CAN HEAR THOSE THINGS IN HERE.
YOU MIGHT WANT TO ORDER A SALAD, INSPECTOR. I COULDN'T BEAR TO EAT ANY-THING ELSE... HERE.
HEH. I GUESS THE LITTLE LADY'S LETTING THE CRITTERS GET TO HER. BRING ME A...
...UH, BRING ME A HAM-BURGER.
MRUUUH
PLEASE, BRENDA, I MUST SPEAK WITH YOU. I'VE BEEN THINKING...
NOW, ROMANOWSKI, THERE'S SOMEBODY YOUR PALS HAVE BEEN PLAYING WITH... ONE LAMONT CRANSTON. WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT HIM?
MR. CRANSTON? WHY, IT WAS HE WHO WANTED ME TO MEET WITH THE REPORTER.
I ONLY KNOW THAT NITTI SEEMS TO THINK CRANSTON IS WITH GUZIK...
...AND GUZIK THINKS HE'S WITH NITTI OR SBARBARRO. SOUNDS TO ME AS IF...
...HE'S PURPOSELY GOING AROUND STIRRING UP TROUBLE!
MOOOO
NO. IT CAN'T BE. THE SHADOW KICKING OFF HIS GANG WAR...
...AND CRANSTON MIXING UP TROUBLE? BUT THAT... I CAN'T...
MWUHHH
6

DAMN IT, I CAN'T THINK WITH THOSE COWS, WHY CAN'T THEY--
COBB SALAD, MADAME.
AND THE GENTLEMAN'S HAMBURGER.
MOOOO
INSPECTOR, WHAT--?
OH!
OH, BRENDA! I'VE BEEN WANTING TO TAKE YOU IN MY ARMS FOR SO LONG... BUT I HAVEN'T DESERVED IT! YOU'VE BEEN SO BRAVE... RISKING YOURSELF LIKE THIS!
BUT IT WAS BRAVE OF YOU, TOO, TAD... JUST TO COME HERE...
NO, NOT BRAVE. BECAUSE I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THE RISK... ONLY YOU, BRENDA!
I WANT TO DESERVE YOU AGAIN, BRENDA! I WANT TO BE WHAT YOU WANTED, WHAT MY FATHER WANTED ...A MAN.
THEN COME WITH ME, HELP ME FIND MARGO!
I DON'T CARE IF SHE'S FULL OF SECRETS AND DECEIT... SHE'S THE ONLY ONE I EVER TRUSTED TO CARE ABOUT ME. NOT MY POSITION OR MY MONEY... BUT ME!
7


SOMEDAY YOU'LL SAY THE SAME ABOUT ME, BRENDA. I PROMISE YOU WILL.
SIR?
WAS THE GENTLEMAN'S HAMBURGER SATISFACTORY, SIR?
JUST... BRING ME A SALAD, WILL YA?
A SALAD AND A TICKET TO NEW YORK?
The GAYETY
BURLESK
SMOKE IF YOU LIKE
LET'S GIVE THESE STOCKYARDS A LOOK. IF THERE'RE ANY SURPRISES, I WANT US TO--
HALF-STEP.
NITTI?
NO FIREWORKS. I GOT TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT SOMETHING, FRATELLO.
I THINK GUZIK AND THIS CRANSTON BIRD ARE PULLING SOMETHING ON US BOTH...
... AND MAYBE IT'S TIME WE FIGURE OUT WHO'S BEEN TELLING WHO WHAT.., BEFORE WE WALK INTO SOMETHING WE GOTTA BE CARRIED OUT OF.
8

ROMANOWSKI SAUSAGE FACTORY
I UNDERSTOOD THAT YOU WOULD BOTH BE HERE.
NITTI SAID HE'D BE HERE. WE TALKED ABOUT IT...
I CAN'T PRESENT MY BUSINESS OFFER UNTIL I HAVE YOU BOTH.
HE'LL BE HERE, CRANSTON. HE'LL BE HERE.
THEY'RE HERE. HOODLUMS SPREADING OUT ALL OVER THE GROUNDS. LET'S JUST HOPE IT'S NITTI'S HOODLUMS, AND NOT--
WAIT, HARRY...
...IF I REMEMBER THOSE PHOTOS CORRECTLY...
IT'S BOTH OF THEM! SOMETHING'S WRONG, HARRY. SOMETHING'S WRONG.
EVENING, BOYS.
MR. NITTI? AND HALF-STEP? BUT... BUT YOU WEREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE...
LIFE'S JUST FULL OF SURPRISES, ISN'T IT?

BAM BAM BAM
HELLO, JAKE. AND THIS MUST BE MR. CRANSTON.
I BEEN WANTING TO MEET MISTER CRANSTON... UNDER THE RIGHT CIRCUMSTANCES.
FRANK, WHAT IS THIS? WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THIS CRACKBRAIN?
I WAS AFRAID OF THIS--
ME AND HALF-STEP FINALLY CAUGHT ON... THAT SOMEBODY WAS STIRRING UP A LITTLE RHUBARB JUST TO MAKE A PLAY...
...THE BOSS WENT FOR TOO MUCH! HE SHOULD'VE KNOWN THIS MIGHT HAPPEN!
I'VE GOT NEWS FOR YOU, HARRY. HE DID.
... AND WHOEVER DID THAT IS GOING TO BE DEAD.
THAT'S WHY HE BROUGHT ALL OF YOU BOYS IN.

BAM
KA-CHAM
KA-CHAM
KA-CHAM
KA-CHAM
KLEESH
BOOM
BOOM
GET THIS GUY!
BOOM
KA CHAM
BA-BA
BA-BA-BAM
11

HA HA HA HA HA HA
SPAK SPAK SPAK
OH GOD, OH GOD
BA-BOOM BA BOOM
BA-BA-BAM
HAHAHAHAHA
HA! WHO'S LAUGHIN' NOW, HUH?
BAM! BAM!

KEEP HIM ALIVE--FOR NOW!
AND FIND CRANSTON! AND THAT OTHER GUY! NOW!
MARGO. MARGO. THEY GOT THE BOSS, MARGO. WE GOTTA--
KSSSHHH
I'M WAY AHEAD OF YOU, HARRY.
FWSH!
THERE IT IS, CLIFF...
THE MASTER NEEDS US, SHREVNITZ...
So they moved in. Seven against the mobs.
And I'd always thought I was born too late to be a WAR reporter.

BAM

BAM BAM BAM

THUK

GHOW GHOW

HAHAHAHAHA

HAHAHA

BAF

HAHAHA

KA CHAMCHAM

I couldn't get it all down. But I kept my head.

HA HA HA

14

15

THERE'S ANOTHER WINDOW INTO THE OFFICE ON THE OTHER SIDE...
...IF THERE'S A FIRE ESCAPE, I CAN...
BLAM BLAM BLAM
WOOP
BAM BAM BAM
KLIK KLIK
OH, NO!
SPUK
SPUK
WHERE--
OH!

THE SLAUGHTER-HOUSE.
I SAW HER COME IN HERE.
YOU TAKE THAT WAY...
HI, GIRLIE.
WHAT'S THE GIRL GONNA DO WITH HER LITTLE HAMMER, HUH?
HUH?

THK
RUTLEDGE!
UGH!
SPANG
TANG
CHING
CHANG
GET EVERYBODY! EVERY-BODY!
WE GOT 'EM PINNED! WE CAN CLEAN 'EM OUT!
WE...
WHAT THE HELL --?
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
YOU DON'T GET OITQUAKES IN --
OH.
Rmmmmmrrrmrmm
18

MMMWAAH
MROOOo
AAAAAAA
MMHUHRR

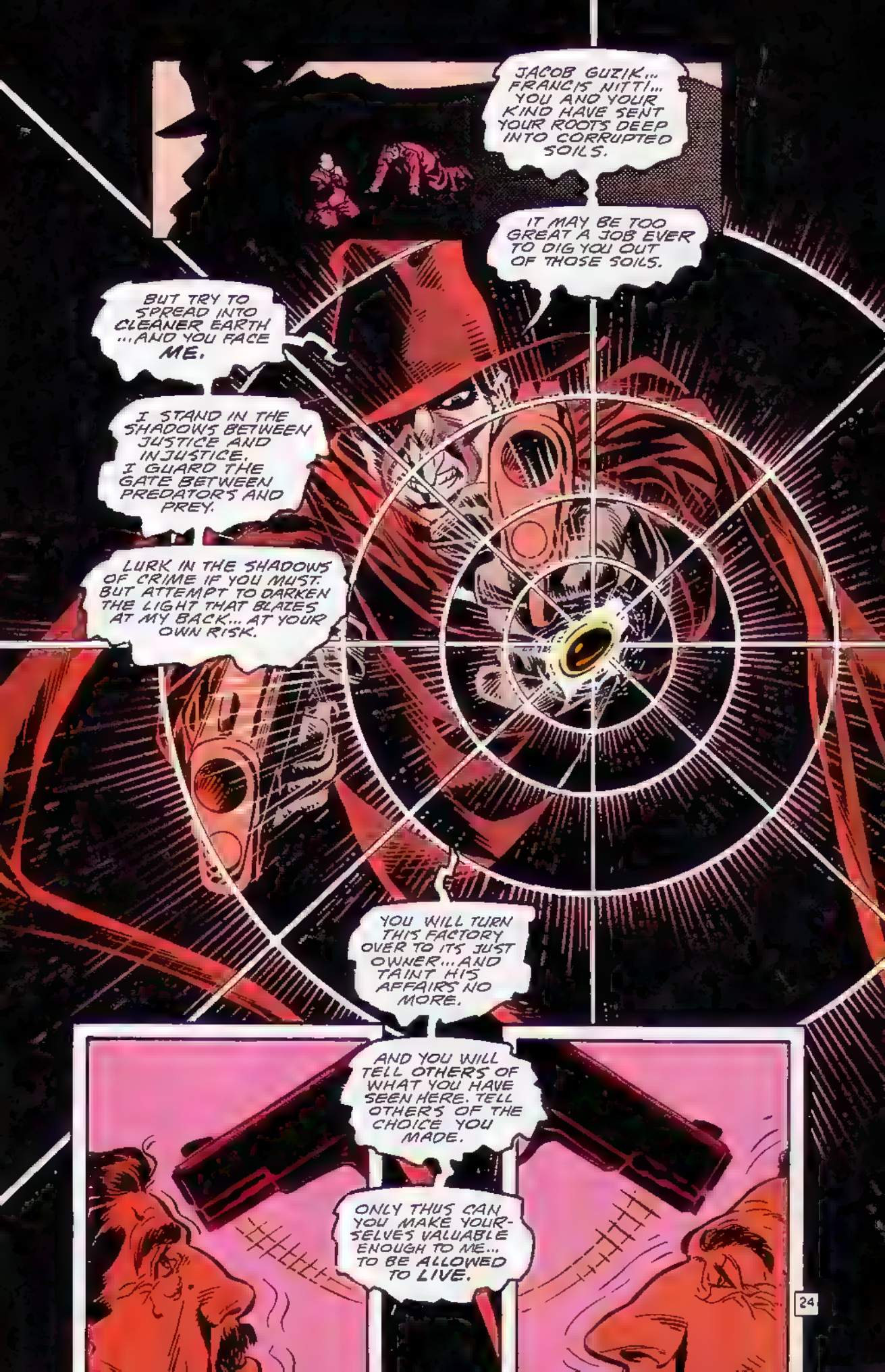
GO! GO! GO!
THAT A GIRL, BRENDA!
19

DIDN'T I TELL YOU? DIDN'T I TELL YOU THAT SINGER WOULD KNOW WHERE EVERYONE WAS --FOR THE RIGHT PRICE?
MARGO .. I WANT TO FIND...
BOOM
TAO!
NOW, B.MBO-- NOW--
KKUH
LOOKA ME, CLIFF! I'M AN APE-MAN!
20

GOOD FOR YOU. NOW COME ON...
WE GOTTA REACH THE MASTER!
SOME-BODY'S COMING!
KSSSHHH
GET DOWN THERE! HE'S GETTIN' AWAY! HE'S--
BUDDA BUDDA

MARGO! ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? MY GOD ...YOU'RE COVERED WITH BLOOD.
IT'S OKAY, HARRY. IT'S NOT MINE.
NOW RUN. WE HAVE TO SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED TO THE...
HAHAHA
...CHIEF.
HAHAHAHAHA
YOU'RE NUTS! YOU'RE HURT--I GOT THE GUN -- I GOT THE POWER--
YOU THINK I'M GONNA HELP YOU?
I GAVE YOU A SIMPLE CHOICE, SBARBARO SERVE MY ENDS ...AND LIVE.
OPPOSE ME...AND DIE.
NUTS!
BOOM
BOOM

HA HA!
AAAAAAA
HAHAHAHA
"AND NOW THE SAME CHOICE IS YOURS..."


JACOB GUZIK... FRANCIS NITTI... YOU AND YOUR KIND HAVE SENT YOUR ROOTS DEEP INTO CORRUPTED SOILS.
IT MAY BE TOO GREAT A JOB EVER TO DIG YOU OUT OF THOSE SOILS.
BUT TRY TO SPREAD INTO CLEANER EARTH ...AND YOU FACE ME.
I STAND IN THE SHADOWS BETWEEN JUSTICE AND INJUSTICE. I GUARD THE GATE BETWEEN PREDATORS AND PREY.
LURK IN THE SHADOWS OF CRIME IF YOU MUST. BUT ATTEMPT TO DARKEN THE LIGHT THAT BLAZES AT MY BACK... AT YOUR OWN RISK.
YOU WILL TURN THIS FACTORY OVER TO ITS JUST OWNER... AND TAINT HIS AFFAIRS NO MORE.
AND YOU WILL TELL OTHERS OF WHAT YOU HAVE SEEN HERE. TELL OTHERS OF THE CHOICE YOU MADE.
ONLY THUS CAN YOU MAKE YOURSELVES VALUABLE ENOUGH TO ME... TO BE ALLOWED TO LIVE.

♪CHI!!!!!!I-CAGO ...CHI-CAGO...♪
So there it is. A few wounded but patched up. A few questions, but he's got the answers.
...I JUST WANNA SAY.. ♪THEY DO THINGS THEY DON'T DO ON BROADWAY...♪
And me, I even got my big break.
...YOU'LL HAVE THE TIME...THE TIME OF ♪YOUR LIFE...♪
STRANGE GANGWAR BREAKS MOB MEAT GRIP EXCLUSIVE BY CHICK HECK
♪...I SAW A MAN WHO DANCED WITH HIS WIFE...♪
Doesn't reveal much, but it sells. And it's got the public eye on his business... like HE wanted it.
I guess it all came out like he wanted it. I'm still not sure just how he did it...
WELCOME Palais de JOEY
...but if he does it again, I want to BE there.
♪...IN CHICAGO ...MY HOME TOWN!♪
25
THE END

For years, she lived alone in a tower while her husband fought chaos and evil.

Now
Inza Nelson
is. . .

THE ALL-NEW

Dr. Fate

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William Messner-Loebs • Vince Giarrano • Peter Gross

Available in January

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TO WAGE HIS WAR ON CRIME,
HE'D GO TO ANY LENGTHS . . .
. . . BUT THIS TIME, HE'S GONE TOO FAR.
VENOM
WHEN POWER KILLS
BEGINNING IN
BATMAN: LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT #16
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